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DE RUEHUL #0351/01 0650024
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 060024Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3497
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 5330
RUEHSW/AMEMBASSY BERN PRIORITY 0600

UNCLAS SEOUL 000351

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OTRA](#) [KS](#)
SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE GRANTED FOR ECONOMIC BILATS
DELEGATION

REF: SECSTATE 20372

11. (U) Embassy Seoul welcomes and grants country clearance to Economic Bilats Delegation members for their official visit to South Korea, March 7-14, 2009. The purpose of the visit is to participate in U.S.-ROK Bilateral Economic Trade consultations to be held March 11 and 12.

CONTACT INFORMATION

12. (U) Point of contact for the visit is Economic Officer Annie Lee.

Office telephone: (82)(2) 397-4255
Embassy operator: (82)(2) 397-4114 then press "0"
Cell phone: (82)(10) 4796-9811
Fax number: (82)(2) 397-4431 (unclassified)
Unclassified email: LeeAS@state.gov

LODGING

13. (U) The Embassy has reserved rooms at the Lotte Hotel for the Delegation at per diem rates. The rates include tax and service charges. Cancellation policy is 24 hours prior to arrival to avoid a one-night penalty. Hotel information is as follows: Lotte Hotel Seoul, 1 Sogong-dong, Jung-gu, Seoul 100-070, South Korea, Tel: (82)(2) 771-1000, Fax: (82)(2) 752-3758. Reservation confirmation numbers for the delegation members are:

Bryant Trick, 3/8-3/14, Conf. No. 10194650-01
Su-Jin Yoo, 3/8-3/14, Conf. No. 10194650-02
Jeff Weiss, 3/09-3/14, Conf. No. 10194650-03
Jeffrey Dutton, 3/7-3/14, Conf. No. 10194650-04
Joshua Pierce, 3/7-3/14, Conf. No. 10194650-05
Jordan Heiber, 3/9-3/14, Conf. No. 10195527-01
Jonathan McHale, 3/9-3/14, Conf. No. 10194650-06
Jane Doherty, 3/10-3/12, Conf. No. 10196542-01

TRANSPORTATION

14. (U) The delegation lead will be met at the airport by Control Officer Annie Lee. Ms. Lee will provide details via email.

15. (U) Effective November 17, 2008, individuals traveling to Korea on a diplomatic or official U.S. passport will be granted stays of up to 90 days without a visa. Please pay particular attention, however, to the types of activities allowed during this 90-day visa-free stay: "travel/transit, common-use, attending meetings, visit & stay with family, etc. However, profit making or employment is disallowed." Individuals seeking employment or profit will still need to request a visa.

¶6. (U) There is a departure tax of 28,000 won for all non-diplomatic passport holders. For travelers on diplomatic passports, the departure tax should have been added to your ticket by your travel office. If your travel office has already added the tax to the price of your tickets, you can pick up a refund when leaving Korea. After going through immigration, look for the tax refund kiosk (one is located near Gate 28) and present your passport and tickets for a cash refund.

PORTABLE COMPUTER DEVICES

¶7. (SBU) Personal computers may not enter Department of State facilities. Personnel bringing official devices must advise the Regional Security Office and Information Systems Security Office (ext. 4244/4151), prior to bringing the equipment into the Embassy.

THREAT ASSESSMENT

¶8. (U) Americans in Seoul are subject to worldwide threat from international terrorists, although we have no information to suggest any specific terrorists threats directed at Americans here. Political demonstrations occur frequently in Seoul, and are occasionally anti-American. Americans can minimize personal risk by staying away from demonstrations and by avoiding confrontation or altercations with protestors. While relatively infrequent by U.S. standards, street crime does occur. Most reported crimes involve pick-pocketing in tourist areas and are predominantly non-violent in nature. The security precautions a person would take in any large city are appropriate throughout South Korea.

¶9. (SBU) As a matter of prudence, you must assume that all rooms, telephones, cellular phones, and fax machines can be monitored. You should not discuss sensitive or classified information in uncontrolled area. Official travelers should ensure that hard-copy and electronic sensitive information is not left in hotel rooms. Computers, including laptops and Personal Digital Assistants, cannot be brought into the Embassy except with prior permission from the RSO office.

¶10. (U) Police are considered capable and well trained. Seoul metropolitan authorities staff English-speaking personnel 24 hours daily to handle local emergencies. Telephone numbers are as follows: 112 police emergency, 119 fire and ambulance.
STEPHENS